



UTILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 4, 2014

Members Present:

Trustee Jeff Hicks and Treasurer Howard Pizzo

Members Absent:

Trustee R. Douglas Kosinski

Staff Members Present:

Finance Director Jeff Anderson, Township Engineer Gary Arnold, Community Development Director Mark Graham and Utility Director Tom Morrissey

1. Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order by Jeff Hicks at 4:46 p.m.

2. Public Comment:

N/A

3. Set/Adjust Agenda:

Howard Pizzo moved to accept the agenda as written. Jeff Hicks seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

4. Set/Adjust Minutes:

Howard Pizzo moved to approve the May 1, 2014 meeting minutes as written. Jeff Hicks seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

5. Proposed Amendments to the Water System Ordinance, Tom Morrissey:

Tom Morrissey provided an overview of the township guarantee on the installation of the fresh water connecting line for residential property, as discussed on May 1st, which included the following items:

- The Utility Department experienced a problem in that we didn't have anything in writing, regarding the water system and who was responsible, and how we went by past practices.
- Mark Graham did a draft of amendments to the Water Systems Ordinance.
- Staff massaged parts of the ordinance that Mark was not familiar with.
- Tom reviewed it with the Fire Chief and Fire Marshall and went over the fire services provisions.
- Mark had Gary Arnold go through it with regard to the Engineer aspect.

- We are now bringing it back to the Committee.

Mark Graham then provided an overview of the process that took place, which included the following items:

- He stated that Richard Watkins had asked him to draft an ordinance, with Tom's assistance, to address the Water Systems situation.
- He provided a couple samples of past situations, how they came about, and how they have been handled in the past.
- Since 1964 the Township has given a lifetime guarantee for water services.
- He shared concerns about the aging Water System.
- Richard's proposal was to give property owners a one year guarantee from installation for new houses, and for existing houses a one year guarantee from the adoption of the ordinance.
- Provided background information with regard to how the amended ordinance was drafted.
- Reported that the proposed ordinance has not been reviewed by an attorney.

Jeff Hicks asked Tom Morrissey to provide details on the process for obtaining a new water service.

Tom Morrissey provided details of the current process as follows:

- Staff provides the property owner with an estimate of what it will cost to put the line in, which is then provided to the accounting department.
- The Accounting Department adds the Capital charges, installation charges, and whatever is on the books for that particular area, and then the financial arrangements are made.
- Once the Accounting Department is satisfied that they have a payment agreement, the Utility Department is notified that the financial portion has been satisfied.
- We then schedule to put the service in.

A discussion ensued between the Committee members with regard to the following:

- Actual contract, written versus unwritten
- Payment obligation contracts
- Life-time guarantee
- Number of water service repairs in a typical year
- Educating Plumbers in the area of the proposed changes to the Water System ordinance
- What would be guaranteed
- Possible future Water System Process
- Builders conveying the guarantee to the homeowners
- Change to read that the one year guarantee begins upon the date of installation of the water meter, instead of the date of installation of the service line.
- A standard repair being anywhere from \$500-\$1000

- Should the proposed Water System Ordinance be reviewed by and Attorney
- Enforcement and codification of an ordinance.
- Working with the Building Department to make Plumbers/Contractors aware of the ordinance change.
- Language of ordinance has changed relative to.....as opposed to saying no one's lines are covered anymore.
- The ordinance mandates that only Delta Township can install the water service lines for residential properties.
- The ordinance says if there are repairs to the line the Township must do them, but the property owner must pay for the repairs.
- State Law mandates that Delta Township is responsible for installing the water delivery up to the meter.
- Quality of the water.
- State law mandates that all fittings have to be lead free, and how the Township is ultimately responsible
- Mandatory installation policy relating to Health and Safety concerns, to assure that all State and Federal requirements are met.

Jeff Hicks asked Mark Graham if after hearing our discussion if he felt comfortable.

Mark Graham stated that he had a list of legal questions here, and he thought they had been fully addressed and if the committee is comfortable, he had no problem taking the ordinance to the Board with a favorable recommendation from the Utility Committee. He thought Delta Township will be light years ahead of communities that have nothing and continue to rely on unwritten policies.

Mark Graham then stated that he would like a motion from the Utility Committee recommending adoption of the proposed water ordinance to pass along to the Township Board for final action. Howard Pizzo made the motion. Jeff Hicks seconded. All agreed. Motion passes.

6. Other Business:

Jeff Anderson informed the Utility Committee that the 2015 Proposed Budget went out last week, and that we are working on a couple large issues pertaining to the Waste Water Plant, which are intentionally not in the budget for two reasons, they are not operational and we have no idea of what they are going to cost yet. He just wanted to inform the Committee that this is coming, if there are any major issues this committee may have to take up in 2015, or maybe even this fall, and these will be paid out of our reserve funds. The plant is 30 years old and it is time to address these issues. There is a reason we have \$9 million dollars in this fund, and it is time.

7. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m.